

Application No. 09/628,880
Filed: July 31, 2000
TC Art Unit: 2155
Confirmation No.: 4970

REMARKS

Claims 1, 13 and 25-27 have been amended. Claims 1-27 are pending.

The claim amendments are for the purpose of clarification. In particular, the amendments provide antecedent basis for "said user". The amendments also clarify that the list of objects is presented to the user, to enable the selection of an object in the list by the user, and the information from the database is displayed to the user.

In the Office Action, it is indicated that claims 10 and 11 are "substantial duplicates", and therefore may be objected to under 35 C.F.R. 1.75. However, these claims are not seen as being duplicative, because claim 10 pertains to streaming audio information whereas claim 11 pertains to streaming video information. Thus, it is respectfully requested that this potential objection to claims 10 and 11 be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Tripp, U.S. Patent 6,516,337. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites a method for enabling information associations that includes the following steps:

parsing a document that includes a number of objects;

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forming a list of the objects in the document for which related information is available and presenting the list to a user;

detecting selection of one of the objects in the list by the user;

searching a database for information regarding the selected object; and

displaying information from said database related to the selected object to the user.

As described in the application, this method enables a user to enjoy a richer experience in applications such as Web browsing, due to the automatic creation and display of a list of related information based on the content of a document being viewed by the user, such as a Web page. Although Web pages and other documents often include embedded links to related information, these links are determined by the creator of the document rather than by the user. By creating a list of related information based on selection of an object by the user, the method of claim 1 provides for information associations that are potentially much larger and/or complex than those anticipated by the document creator, and that are specifically tailored to each user of the document.

Tripp discloses a search engine system that employs a central index server along with software "agents" 204 and related data that reside on Web hosts 208 that store searchable and retrievable

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content. The system has three primary modes of operation as follows: 1) processing search queries, 2) generating "brochures" for storage on Web hosts, and 3) updating the central index. See col. 11., lines 40 - 44.

Processing search queries involves receiving the queries from remote user browsers, parsing the queries, consulting the search index to obtain search results, and returning the results to the remote user browser. See col. 11., lines 44 - 56. The search queries are messages containing requests for information from the search engine system, specifically requests for information that identifies Web pages with content pertaining to the subject of the query.

Generating brochures is performed explicitly by web site administrators. The brochures contain various information pertaining to the Web sites on which they are stored, the information being used to improve the indexing of the sites. See col. 11., lines 15 - 34. A "host" brochure includes information such as the name of the host, the company operating the host, technical contact information, domain names hosted, etc. See Table 1, column 14. A "site" brochure includes information similar to that contained in the host brochure, but also includes information such as the category of the site's content, the

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intended audience, key words, product identifications, etc. See Table 2, col. 15.

The central index is updated in a two-part process. The agents 204 automatically generate and update local indexes of information on their respective servers. The agents then generate update requests which are sent to an update processor, which uses the update information to update the central search index. See, e.g., Figure 8. When generating/updating the local indexes, the agents operate based on a local "object catalog" or file system information. In addition to indexing HTML files such as done by conventional search engine indexers, the agent can also index non-HTML files and objects, including local database objects. For example, a product catalog stored in a database file may be indexed by the agent. See col. 10, lines 36-61.

It is respectfully urged that Tripp does not anticipate claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), because Tripp does not disclose the method recited in claim 1. Specifically, Tripp is not seen to disclose forming a list of objects in a document for which related information is available and presenting the list to a user, detecting the selection of one of the objects in the list by the user, searching a database for information regarding the selected

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object and displaying information from the database related to the selected object to the user.

With respect to forming a list of objects in a document, the Office Action refers to the processing of search queries and the general description in columns 8 - 11 of Tripp. However, a search query is not a document, and no objects included in a search query are ever listed for the purpose of user selection from among such objects. The elements of a query (i.e., text strings) are usually created by the user in the first place, and then used by the system to conduct the desired search. Furthermore, the description in columns 8 - 11 of Tripp is not seen to disclose this functionality recited in claim 1. This section of Tripp describes the general structure and operation of the search engine system, which has been summarized above. There is no processing of documents and the objects contained in documents in the manner set forth in claim 1.

With respect to detecting the selection of an object in the list by the user, searching a database for information regarding a selected object, and displaying the information to the user, the Office Action refers to the mention of a product catalog (column 10) and to the general description in columns 11-12 and 14 of Tripp. Here again, no pertinent disclosure in Tripp is seen. To

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begin with, the Office Action is vague about what item in Tripp is being equated with the term "object" in claim 1. If an object is something found in a search query, such as a text string making up part of the query, then it cannot encompass a product catalog or other information file found on a Web host. Alternatively, if items such as product catalogs are taken to be "objects", then there is clearly no disclosure in Tripp of such items being contained in a document - they are themselves documents that are contained in the Web host file system and/or database. Furthermore, regardless of whether search query contents or host information files are designated as "objects", there is clearly no disclosure in Tripp of the selection of an object in a list by the user, searching a database for information regarding a selected object, and displaying the information to the user. As already described, search query contents are not utilized in such a manner. And the Web host files become known to a user as a result of a search based on user-provided search terms; they are not used as user-selectable objects that serve as the inputs to a search for information regarding the object. Thus, contrary to the assertions in the Office Action, Tripp fails to disclose these steps of claim 1.

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In view of the above, it is respectfully urged that Tripp fails to disclose the method of claim 1, and therefore claim 1 is allowable in view of Tripp under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

The remaining claims incorporate, either directly or indirectly, elements like those recited in claim 1 and discussed above, and therefore the above arguments are likewise applicable to the remaining claims. While the Office Action makes several assertions regarding the remaining claims, it is not believed to be necessary to rebut these assertions at present due to the dispositive nature of the arguments presented above. Applicant does not accept any of the assertions in the Office Action regarding the remaining claims, and reserves the right to challenge such assertions at a later time if it becomes necessary.

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Based on the foregoing, it is believed that all the claims of this application are presently allowable. Favorable action is respectfully requested. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney to discuss any matter that would expedite allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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